

## Message Text

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43

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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Z 201110Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 7434

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 4756

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC PFOR YO (TOTH, LASZLO)

SUBJ: TOTH CASE

1. AT AFGHAN NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION LAST NIGHT MOJSOV TOOK ME ASIDE TO DISCUSS TOTH CASE. HE SAID HE WOULD ABSOLUTELY GUARANTEE THAT TOTH WOULD BE RELEASED THIS MONTH. (TODAY CONOFF IN FSFA WHEN CALL CAME THROUGH THAT IT WOULD BE JULY 23.) MOJSOV CLAIMED THAT AFTER I DISCUSSED MATTER WITH HIM LAST WEEK HE HAD CAUSED FOREIGN SECRETARIAT TO MAKE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT AND HAD ENSURED THAT TOTH WAS TOLD. I RESPONDED TOTH'S SISTER HAD SEEN HIM JULI 18 AND THAT HE HAD NOT KNOWN ABOUT IT.

2. MOJSOV CONFIRMED THAT POZEG HAD BEEN RELEASED OVER A MONTH AGO BUT ATTEMPTED TO EXPLAIN DIFFERENT TREATMENT OF TOTH ALONG FOLLOWING LINES. DECISION WAS MADE IN MAY (NOT APRIL) BUT THE PRESIDENCY HAD NOT REALIZED DIFFICULT LEGAL PROBLEMS CAUSED BY EXPELLING A YUGOSLAV CITIZEN. HE SAID THAT CITIZENSHIP HAD TO BE STRIPPED FROM HIM FIRST AND THAT HAD NEVER BEEN DONE IN YUGOSLAVIA BEFORE. (COMMENT: SOUNDS LIKE SO MUCH HOKUM TO ME SINCE PREVIOUSLY DUAL NATIONALS UPON RELEASE FROM PRISON HAD BEEN EXPELLED WITHOUT TAKING AWAY CITIZENSHIP. END COMMENT).

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3. MOJSOV CLAIMED THAT FROM THE BEGINNING OF THIS CASE THERE HAD BEEN TWO PEOPLE PRESSURING YUGOSLAV AUTHORITIES TO GAIN TOTH'S RELEASE--MOJSOV AND SILBERMAN--AND THEN HE WENT INTO A LONG SONG AND DANCE ABOUT HOW STUBBORN THE LEGAL COURTS AND AUTHORITIES WERE AND HOW THEY RESISTED PRESSURE FROM FOREIGN SECRETARIAT AS WELL AS AMERICAN EMBASSY. I TOLD HIM THAT I UNDERSTOOD HIS INTERNAL BUREAUCRATIC PROBLEMS BUT LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE HE HAD TO UNDERSTAND THAT THERE WAS NO WAY CASES SUCH AS TOTH'S COULD BE SWEEPED UNDER THE RUG, THAT USG WOULD ALWAYS REACT STRONGLY TO WHAT WE PERCEIVED AS CAPRICIOUS IMPRISONMENT OF AN INNOCENT AMERICAN NO MATTER WHAT HIS POSITION OR STATUS. MOJSOV SAID "I UNDERSTAND THAT, I HAVE SPENT TIME IN THE U.S. BUT OTHER PEOPLE HERE DO NOT. THEY ASSUME IF YOU RAISE TOO MUCH OF A FUSS IT MUST BE BECAUSE OF A SECRET MOTIVATION SINCE JUST AN ORDINARY AMERICAN COULD NOT BE THAT IMPORTANT."

4. I ENDED CONVERSATION WITH HOPE THAT WE COULD AVOID SUCH A PROBLEM IN OUR RELATIONS IN THE FUTURE AND HE CONCURRED.

5. COMMENT: JULY 23 OF COURSE IS DATE OF NIKOLA TESLA CEREMONIES AND IT MAY WELL BE THAT THEY HAVE ALWAYS HAD THAT DATE IN MIND FOR TOTH RELEASE. I AM REMINDED THAT IN MAY JUST BEFORE I WENT TO THE STATES BERNARDIC, AT A RECEPTION, INDICATED UNWILLINGNESS TO GIVE ME A SPECIFIC DATE FOR TOTH'S RELEASE SAYING IT COULD BE ANY TIME BUT IT MIGHT BE JULY. (ALSO, SCRANTON ARRIVES JULY 23.)

6. MOJSOV ALL ALONG HAS ATTEMPTED TO SEEM MORE CONCILIATORY ON THIS AND OTHER QUESTIONS THAN HIS SUBORDINATES, INDEED, THE FURTHER DOWN YOU GO THE MORE RUDE AND STUBBORN I FIND THE FOREIGN SECRETARIAT TYPES. MOJSOV HAS JUST RETURNED FROM A VISIT TO THE STATES AND HE AND HIS WIFE WERE GLOWING ABOUT THE THRILL OF THE BICENTENNIAL AND HIS WIFE CONFIDENTIALLY TOLD RICKY THAT THEIR DAUGHTER STUDYING AT

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COLUMBIA IS VERY SERIOUS ABOUT AN AMERICAN PROFESSOR (WITH TENURE). NOTWITHSTANDING, I TAKE ALL OF MOJSOV'S COMMENTS WITH A KILOGRAM OF SALT.

7. I STILL BELIEVE THAT, LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE, ZARB SHOULD MAKE COMMENTS ALONG LINES SUGGESTED. GOY HAS CORRECTLY ASSUMED THAT DEPARTMENT DOES NOT REGARD PLIGHT OF THESE DUAL NATIONALS AS A

PRIORITY INTEREST AND THEREFORE HERLJEVIC WILL  
CONTINUE TO TREAT THEM AS ASSETS FOR HIS OWN PURPOSES  
UNLESS WE MAKE THE PRICE TOO HIGH.  
SILBERMAN

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** FOREIGN RELATIONS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, PRISONERS RELEASE, DUAL NATIONALS, COMMEMORATIVE CELEBRATIONS, SCIENTISTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 20 JUL 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** BoyleJA  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976BELGRA04756  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760278-0975  
**From:** BELGRADE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
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**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760742/aaaabkqc.tel  
**Line Count:** 119  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION SS  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** BoyleJA  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 20 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <20 MAY 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <14 SEP 2004 by BoyleJA>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** TOTH CASE  
**TAGS:** CASC, PFOR, YO, US, (TOTH, LASZLO), (MOJSOV)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006